

LESSON 20
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AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

The POWER of God!

About Our Cover ...

These spectacular lightning bolts are vivid manifestations of the POWER of God! Man stands in awe of the tremendous forces of nature. Yet few realize that the physical laws governing such phenomena were originally set in motion, and are kept operating, by the DYNAMIC Spirit of God. God sits at the controls of the entire universe -- He rules and sustains His entire creation by the POWER of the HOLY SPIRIT!

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ACTION!

JESUS PROMISED HIS DISCIPLES: "Ye shall receive POWER, AFTER that the HOLY SPIRIT is come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

What did Jesus mean by this statement? Is this the SAME POWER -- the SAME SPIRIT -- that resided in Christ and enabled Him to OBEY God PERFECTLY? HOW does Jesus' promise also apply to Christians TODAY? Here is the amazing truth!

Power Not Inherent!

Practically no one today understands what the Holy Spirit of God really is. Many have FALSELY assumed and vaguely thought of it as something "mystic" -- a conception of nothingness -- a hovering, fluttering "ghost," a THIRD person of a "trinity."

We hear a lot today about tapping our OWN HIDDEN RESOURCES -- our "inner consciousness" -- the "dormant powers" within the mind. Modern religions are springing up claiming you possess by nature great powers WITHIN YOURSELF.

But the TRUTH of the matter is that the Holy Spirit is something that was NOT BORN IN YOU! YOU were NOT born with this great power. It is something you must RECEIVE from God! (Acts 2:38.)

Most people don't realize that the HOLY SPIRIT is a TREMENDOUS SOURCE of dynamic, SUPERNATURAL POWER that can BECOME A PART OF OUR VERY MINDS. It is the very ESSENCE of God Himself -- His very life, His mind, His nature -- and it IMPARTS POWER! And THIS IS the power we must have working within us before we can be BORN as God's Sons!

Jesus Had the Power

Let's look at the example of Jesus Christ, whose life was completely FILLED with this supernatural power. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, He performed mighty miracles (Acts 2:22). He HEALED the SICK. He cast out demons, and He had discernment to know whether or not a person was demon possessed. He STILLED the STORM and turned water into wine.

PHOTO CAPTION: AWESOME POWER -- A camera's-eye view of a hurricane's eye, as taken from a jet plane. The average hurricane unleashes energy equivalent to TEN Hiroshima-type atomic bomb blasts -- in just one second!

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus KEPT God's laws -- the Ten Commandments -- PERFECTLY! (I Peter 2:21, 22.)

Jesus possessed tremendous power, but He said, "I can OF MINE OWN SELF DO NOTHING!" (John 5:30)

Few realize that His miracles and obedience were NOT done by any supernatural power of HIS OWN. They were done through the POWER of the FATHER! JESUS EXPLAINED: "The FATHER that dwelleth IN ME, HE DOETH THE WORKS! (John 14:10.) The Father dwelt in Him THROUGH the Holy Spirit!

Power to Obey God's Law

Contrary to the common teaching among religious circles today, Jesus DID NOT do away with God's laws! Rather, He established and MAGNIFIED them to GREATER SPIRITUAL REQUIREMENTS (Isaiah 42:21). He taught it is now a sin just to HATE a brother in one's MIND! (Matthew 5:21-22; I John 3:15.)

CHRIST MAGNIFIED THE LAW to its highest spiritual fulfillment and showed all the earth -- by the life HE lived -- HOW it is to be fulfilled in its PERFECT, SPIRITUAL INTENT! Control of bodily actions is no longer enough. Now THE MIND, the HEART, must also become PURE -- SINLESS -- just as Christ's was!

But the "no-law" deceiver will object, "No man can keep the commandments in their true spiritual intent. It is not HUMANLY possible."

That's RIGHT! IT ISN'T HUMANLY POSSIBLE! Israel, under the Old Covenant, PROVED that carnal man, without the POWER of the Holy Spirit, could not keep God's law when even LESS of its fulfillment was required. They never even APPROACHED the fulfilling of the royal, SPIRITUAL law! And neither can we, OF OURSELVES. We need the MIRACULOUS POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD!

Holy Spirit Now Available

Creation is STILL going on! God continues to work out His great PLAN for man -- even at this very moment! He made man -- His greatest masterpiece of PHYSICAL creation -- of the dust of the ground, in the CLAY IMAGE of Himself (Genesis 1:26; 2:7).

But He did not at that time put His SPIRIT -- the Holy Spirit -- within man. Yet, this is the ONLY POWER which will enable man to keep the supreme SPIRITUAL LAW of LOVE -- the Ten Commandments! And since man was made of MATTER and is mortal -- having only a temporary physical life maintained by eating food, drinking water, breathing air, and the circulation of blood, wherein is the only "life" he possesses -- God's Holy Spirit alone can impart ETERNAL LIFE!

Jesus Christ came to HERALD the glorious coming of the Holy Spirit. He said: "He that BELIEVETH on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly SHALL FLOW rivers of LIVING WATER! But this spake He of the SPIRIT, which they that believe on Him SHOULD RECEIVE" (John 7:38-39).

Peter then clearly defined the way to RECEIVE this Spirit of power: "REPENT, and be BAPTIZED ... and ye shall receive the GIFT

of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

The TIME IS NOW HERE! The Holy Spirit can now begin to dwell in you. It is the ONLY POWER strong enough to enable you -- composed of WEAK, mortal flesh -- to keep the commandments and unlock the treasure house of blessings that God desires to bestow upon YOU IN THIS LIFE, and ultimately impart LIFE FOR ALL ETERNITY!

But the vast majority of people are BLINDED to this truth. Instead, they are attempting to gain these tremendous blessings by their OWN power, even though all the years of human history reveal man's UTTER FAILURE!

Just HOW POWERFUL IS the Holy Spirit we all must have in order to keep God's laws, and receive eternal life? Here is the astounding truth made PLAIN -- from your Bible! See here the MIRACULOUS POWER of the Holy Spirit IN ACTION!

Before You Begin

Have you been PRACTICING the extremely helpful hints for successful Bible study that are given IN LESSON 4?

LESSON 4 was especially designed to HELP YOU get the MOST out of your study time. Its principles, applied, enable you to understand God's Word in a way that was NEVER BEFORE POSSIBLE! Reviewing this special lesson from time to time will reflect your zeal and diligence in desiring to make EVERY word of God a part of your very being!

So why don't you review Lesson 4 RIGHT NOW -- before you go any further and forget!

Power of the Holy Spirit Demonstrated

1. Where does power reside? Psalms 62:11.

Are all things possible with God? Mat. 19:26. Then isn't God ALL POWERFUL? Same verse.

 PHOTO CAPTION: Jesus compared the Holy Spirit to active, dynamic "rivers of LIVING water" that He gives to those who thirst for it.

 PHOTO CAPTION: GOD'S HANDIWORK -- This spiral galaxy contains billions of stars. God says He created the entire universe by the mighty POWER of His Spirit!

2. Who created the heavens and the earth? Gen. 1:1. Did God do this by His POWER? Jer. 32:17.

COMMENT: GOD IS THE CREATOR! Here you are seeing the creative power of the Spirit of God in ACTION! God the Father and God the Son are COMPOSED OF SPIRIT (John 4:24). THIS Spirit is also the Spirit of GREAT POWER!

3. Did the Spirit OF God TRANSFORM the CREATIVE ENERGY of God -- a thing which CANNOT be seen -- into the physical creation we can see around us? Heb. 11:3.

4. How did God utilize this power in His work of creation? Did He only have to command? Psalms 148:5 and 33:9. Also Gen. 1:2-3.

COMMENT: God "SPAKE, and it was DONE". He is the One who said, "Let there be light" -- and the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters PERFORMED the command, and "there was

light" -- INSTANTLY! The Holy Spirit is a miracle-working power. It overcomes obstacles. This is the Spirit of POWER we need within us!

Now read the entire brief 26th chapter of Job for more vivid illustrations of God's INFINITE POWER.

5. Did God also create MAN by His Spirit of POWER? Gen. 2:7; John 1:1-3.

6. Does God's Holy Spirit -- His miraculous power -- PERMEATE EVERYTHING -- even the entire universe? Psalms 139:7-8. Is it also compared symbolically to FLOWING water? John 7:38-39.

COMMENT: It is obvious that the Holy Spirit could NOT be a separate being -- the so-called "third person" of a "trinity"!

7. Does God SUSTAIN and UPHOLD His creation by the power of the Holy Spirit? Neh. 9:6 and Heb. 1:3. Is He also RULING by this power? Psalms 66:7.

COMMENT: Here is further demonstration of the POWER of the Holy Spirit which we must have working WITHIN US. God sits at the controls of the entire universe -- and He rules and sustains everything by the POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!

8. Is God's miraculous power revealed to us through His PHYSICAL creation? Rom. 1:19-20. Also read rapidly Job, chapters 36:22 through to 42:6, to see how GREAT God really is!

COMMENT: ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE FOR GOD TO PERFORM! (Luke 1:37.) Do you realize the full impact of that statement? Yes, God's INCOMPREHENSIBLE POWER -- by which He created the universe with its TRILLIONS OF STARS and made man from the dust of the ground -- is so GREAT, that absolutely NOTHING IS impossible with Him! He has ABSOLUTE power! And a PART of that very SAME POWER CAN BE IN YOU!

Spirit Rejected in Eden

1. Is "the mind of the FLESH" -- the carnal mind with which you and I were born -- capable of obeying God's SPIRITUAL laws? Rom. 8:7-8. What does this CARNALLY MOTIVATED mind produce? Verse 6. But what is the product of a SPIRIT-DIRECTED mind? Same verse.

2. Is God's Spirit a SOUND and SENSIBLE, LOVING MIND? II Tim. 1:7.

COMMENT: A human mind UNITED WITH and guided BY the Holy Spirit of God leads to PEACE, POWER AND ETERNAL LIFE! But the CARNAL mind, WITHOUT God's Spirit, is HOSTILE toward God and cannot think clearly. Without it you are only "half there," so to speak.

To put it plainly, WE ARE NOT FULLY SOUNDMINDED until we obtain GOD'S MIND! Until we receive it, we are totally motivated by our inherently EVIL, carnal minds (Jer. 17:9).

The SOUND MIND which comes through the indwelling of God's Spirit means just what it implies. It is a truly BALANCED mind. The man possessing it is a BALANCED MAN -- a WHOLE man -- united with and guided by the Supreme Mind of the universe!

3. Was the Holy Spirit of God available to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden? Gen. 2:9. But from what tree did they CHOOSE to eat? Gen. 2:17; 3:3, 6, 7. SIN seems pleasant -- AT FIRST! Then Adam and Eve CHOSE NOT TO FOLLOW God's way to salvation, and thereby REJECTED the Holy Spirit -- didn't they?

4. What was Adam and Eve's GREAT PUNISHMENT for disobeying God? Gen. 3:17-19, 22-24.

COMMENT: If Adam and Eve had partaken of the tree in the Garden of Eden that represented God's HOLY SPIRIT -- the "tree of [eternal] life" -- they would have received the SPIRITUAL mind

of God, and ultimately eternal life, if they had CONTINUED to obey God. But Adam and Eve had to DESIRE the Spirit of God and SURRENDER themselves to God's will in order to receive His Holy Spirit of ETERNAL life -- exactly as all must do TODAY to receive it. THERE HAS NEVER BEEN BUT THIS ONE WAY TO SALVATION! But Adam and Eve CHOSE NOT to receive the Holy Spirit and eternal life GOD'S WAY!

Instead, they followed after the way that pleased their OWN CARNAL NATURE -- the WAY that leads only to death (Gen. 2:17). And because of this SIN, God WITHHELD His Holy Spirit of love and eternal life from mankind (Gen. 3:24).

From the very minute mortal man DISOBEYED God, he was CUT OFF FROM ACCESS to the Spirit of God and the GIFT of eternal life! Ever since then, God has ALLOWED MAN TO GO HIS OWN WAY. God has set apart 6,000 years during which He has ALLOWED mankind to "BURN ITS FINGERS" -- to learn that following the dictates of the CARNAL MIND leads only to misery and death! And mankind, as a whole, HAS CONTINUED CHOOSING the way of disobedience to God (Rom. 3:23). Without the Holy Spirit, suffering and death have resulted!

 PHOTO CAPTION: CONSEQUENCES OF SIN -- Artist's conception of Adam and Eve being driven from the Garden of Eden and the tree of life, as punishment for disobeying their Creator.

But in His great mercy and love for mankind, God promised to make His Holy Spirit available to man once again!

Spirit of Power Promised to Man!

1. Why was Israel of old UNABLE to keep even the LETTER of God's law contained in the Old Covenant? Deut. 5:29.

COMMENT: Israel was a physical, CARNAL church! (Acts 7:38.) They DID NOT HAVE THE STRENGTH OF CHARACTER -- the "heart" -- to be faithful in keeping their covenant vow because they DID NOT POSSESS God's Holy Spirit! It was NOT AVAILABLE to them since there was NO PROMISE OF RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT AT THAT TIME! (John 7:39.) From the time of Adam, God was letting man see the effects of living WITHOUT the Holy Spirit!

Therefore, the RIGHTEOUSNESS under the FIRST covenant HAD to be accomplished through human -- FLESHLY -- effort. But their disobedience PROVES they couldn't obey God's laws by HUMAN power ALONE!

2. HOW did God say He would make it POSSIBLE for men to OBEY His laws? Ezek. 36:26-27.

3. Will the HOLY SPIRIT ultimately be made available to EVERYONE who CHOOSES to receive it? Joel 2:28-29.

4. Remember that the Holy Spirit is compared to LIVING WATERS (John 7:38). Who, then, is the FOUNTAIN SOURCE of the Holy Spirit of life and power? Jer. 17:13 and John 4:10,14.

COMMENT: Jesus Christ is the MEDIATOR of a "better covenant" which contains "better promises" (Heb. 8:6). Among these precious promises is the GIFT of the Holy Spirit which is compared to FLOWING WATER.

5. Did God promise to give His Spirit of power to those who SINCERELY DESIRE -- "THIRST" -- for it? Isa. 44:3 and John 7:37-39.

COMMENT: The Scriptures plainly show that the Holy Spirit

CAN be placed WITHIN man! For "out of his" -- MAN'S -- "BELLY [his innermost being] SHALL FLOW RIVERS of living water."

6. WHEN was the Holy Spirit to be made available to mankind? John 7:39 and 16:7. Doesn't this prove that the Holy Spirit (the "comforter") was not generally available to mankind BEFORE Christ's death and ascension to heaven?

7. Did Jesus specifically promise that the Holy Spirit would dwell in his disciples -- His followers? John 14:17.

COMMENT: When God created man of the dust of the ground, He did not place an obedient nature within him. And when God offered Adam the OPPORTUNITY of receiving the Holy Spirit and eternal life as a GIFT, man's REBELLIOUS NATURE went contrary to God and CHOSE the way that has brought only suffering and death!

But God, in His great mercy, FORETOLD of a time when He would ONCE AGAIN -- after man had experienced the TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES of living without the Holy Spirit -- offer His Spirit to mankind so all could obey the spiritual law, and reap the physical and SPIRITUAL blessings the world really desires. The NEW Covenant promises all this!

Christ Received Great Power!

1. Did Christ -- the "Word" -- become HUMAN FLESH AND BLOOD, with human NATURE? Heb. 2:9, 14; John 1:14 and Heb. 4:14, 15. Was He MIRACULOUSLY BEGOTTEN PHYSICALLY by the Holy Spirit of power? Mat. 1:18-20.

COMMENT: Jesus miraculously became a HUMAN BEING. In His flesh was the SAME HUMAN CARNAL NATURE that you and I have. But Christ would have had NO supernatural power except for ONE thing. He was also begotten SPIRITUALLY by the Holy Spirit. By THIS begettal He derived His SPIRITUAL POWER.

Jesus' miraculous PHYSICAL begettal is a TYPE illustrating our SPIRITUAL begettal by which the miracle-working power of the Holy Spirit will CHANGE and strengthen us the way it did Christ!

2. Did God the Father completely fill Jesus with His Spirit of power? John 3:34 and Col. 1:19. What did Christ do with this tremendous power? Acts 10:38.

3. What are a few of the many breathtaking, DIVINE MIRACLES Jesus performed by the POWER of God's Holy Spirit dwelling within Him? Read them for yourself NOW!

What did Christ DO to water? John 2:1-11. How did Jesus, through the divine power of God, deal with a DEMON-POSSESSED man? Mark 1:23-28. Was Jesus able to CLEANSE -- COMPLETELY HEAL -- a leper? Mark 1:40-42.

4. What did Christ do to the waves of a roaring sea? Mat. 8:23-27. In what way did Christ show mercy to two blind men? Mat. 9:27-31. What MIRACLE did the POWER of the Holy Spirit perform through Jesus for the man with a withered hand? Mat. 12:9-13.

5. How were five thousand people MIRACULOUSLY FED by Jesus? Mat. 14:15-21. Was the POWER OF GOD that Christ possessed so great that just a TOUCH of His garment healed the sick? Mat. 14:34-36. What did Jesus even do to Lazarus by God's power? John 11:39-45.

COMMENT: These are only a FEW of Jesus' astounding miracles recorded in the four gospels. God's miracle-working power was amply demonstrated through the HUMAN body of Jesus Christ. That SAME power of the Holy Spirit can work IN and THROUGH YOU, TOO! This power is the ONLY power which can CHANGE YOU from your present evil, carnal self into a SPIRITUAL CHARACTER acceptable to God!

6. Did Jesus admit He was POWERLESS to do anything by His OWN STRENGTH? John 5:30. Then WHO did all these marvelous works? John 14:10.

COMMENT: Jesus, POWERLESS of His own human self, WAS FILLED WITH THE DIVINE POWER OF THE FATHER! The supernatural power of God the Father did the work of God through Christ's HUMAN BODY.

Jesus had EMPTIED Himself of the divine glory and power He had WITH the Father from eternity! He became FLESH -- just like you and I. He plainly said He could of Himself -- with His own HUMAN strength -- DO NOTHING! NEITHER CAN WE!

7. Did Jesus Christ set a PERFECT EXAMPLE for us in ALL things? Should we IMITATE HIM? I Pet. 2:21. In what other way did Jesus set us an EXAMPLE that WE SHOULD FOLLOW in His steps? John 15:10. Read also Mat. 19:17.

8. Did Jesus keep and teach more than just the letter of the law? Isa. 42:21 and Mat. 5:27, 28, 43-44

COMMENT: Jesus revealed that God's law is a SPIRITUAL law. Today a person not only breaks the command against adultery by performing the physical act, but if he JUST LOOKS and LUSTS after a woman in his own HEART and MIND, he has already committed adultery with her! This MENTAL ACT disobeys the SPIRITUAL INTENT of God's great law of love as summed up in the BASIC Ten Commandments. The whole New Testament is an EXPANSION of God's law to its great SPIRITUAL INTENT and PURPOSE!

9. Was Jesus Christ able to keep the minutest spiritual intent of God's law PERFECTLY -- even though He was human? Heb. 4:14, 15; I Pet. 2:22.

COMMENT: Satan the Devil, through his FALSE MINISTERS (II Cor. 11:13-15), IS DECEIVING THE WORLD into believing that HUMAN BEINGS are not required to KEEP the SPIRITUAL Law of God.

People are falsely taught that Jesus came WITHOUT the normal HUMAN nature of MORTAL flesh. They completely overlook the SUPREME FACTOR in this whole material universe -- the POWER of the HOLY SPIRIT when placed within man! They would like to believe that through some "special process" of His own, Christ could keep the law of God IN OUR STEAD! And, by this, they like to conclude, "We DON'T HAVE TO KEEP the SPIRITUAL LAW"!

NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH!

The human Christ KEPT the spiritual law! SO CAN WE! How? By receiving the SAME SPIRIT He received!!

What Christ did IN OUR STEAD was to DIE for us to pay the penalty of our BREAKING God's Law. And His OBEDIENCE through the Spirit within Him, is an EXAMPLE to us that we also may be obedient through the indwelling POWER of God's Holy Spirit!

Yes, Jesus was tempted in ALL POINTS LIKE WE ARE. He was composed of the SAME weak, carnal, fleshly NATURE. He was TEMPTED through the lusts of His human nature, but He obeyed ALL of God's laws PERFECTLY -- for He was filled with the POWER of the HOLY SPIRIT!

The Mortal Christ Raised Immortal

1. Is Christ the Captain -- the Leader -- of our salvation? Heb. 2:10. Is He the Author of it too? Heb. 5:9.

2. Did Jesus become the first HUMAN to be SPIRITUALLY begotten and born of God? Heb. 1:6 and Col. 1:18.

3. What was the only reason God the Father resurrected the HUMAN Jesus to immortality? Was it because Christ had the Holy Spirit within Him BEFORE His death that the Father raised Him? Rom. 8:9-11.

COMMENT: Rom. 8:10 tells us, "the SPIRIT IS life because of RIGHTEOUSNESS" -- that is, "the [Holy] Spirit is [eternal] life because of [SPIRITUAL] RIGHTEOUSNESS." Christ, as we have seen, was begotten by the Father's Holy Spirit. Its power DWELT in Christ and helped to keep Him spiritually clean -- SINLESS -- until the end. That is why the Father raised the mortal human Christ to eternal life!

Christ is the Leader of our salvation -- He set the PATTERN for the way we MUST follow. The indwelling of the HOLY SPIRIT within us NOW IS clearly as necessary as its presence was within Christ, if we are to expect the Father to raise us to immortality also! Without it we can have NO hope of a RESURRECTION to eternal life!

4. Did Christ live His life in the apostle Paul? Gal. 2:20. Since He did, wasn't Paul's hope of a resurrection to immortality certain, AS LONG AS Christ CONTINUED to dwell in him? II Tim. 4:7-8. Must all Christians also have the MIND of Christ? Phil. 2:5.

COMMENT: Jesus Christ can also live His life within you. Here's how: It is through the HOLY SPIRIT which can dwell in you as it did in Christ. Christ's mind -- His perfect HOLY SPIRITUAL ATTITUDE OF OBEDIENCE -- will thus be IN YOU. YOU will be "in Christ," and CHRIST will be "in you" through the COMMON indwelling of CHRIST'S and the FATHER'S Holy Spirit within you (Rom. 8:9-11). The Father, Christ, and you CAN THUS BE ALL OF ONE SPIRIT -- all of ONE mind -- the HOLY mind.

 PHOTO CAPTION: JESUS' TOMB -- At left is an inside view of the "Garden tomb" in which Jesus' body was laid. Iron fence guards against souvenir-conscious tourists. Right, Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong examines outside wall of sepulcher.

As long as the Spirit of God dwells in you, you will be acceptable to God and be READY to be CHANGED to immortality by the POWER of the Holy Spirit at Christ's coming.

First Arrival of the Holy Spirit

1. Did Jesus promise His disciples they would receive POWER from heaven after His resurrection? Luke 24:49. WHERE did He tell them to WAIT for this PROMISED POWER? Same verse. Also Acts 1:4. Were they to be "baptized with" -- that is, RECEIVE -- the power of the HOLY SPIRIT in Jerusalem? Verses 5 and 8.

2. What GREAT DISPLAY OF POWER did the Holy Spirit cause on this, its first arrival, as they were waiting at Jerusalem for its coming? Acts 2:2-4, 8, 11.

COMMENT: The Spirit of God came with a SOUND as a MIGHTY RUSHING WIND!! It also came with the APPEARANCE of divided -- EQUALLY DISTRIBUTED -- TONGUES OF FIRE! And on this occasion it FILLED ALL 120 of the disciples and SPOKE through them in such a manner that EVERY MAN THERE FROM EVERY NATION HEARD them in HIS OWN LANGUAGE! The MIRACLE was in the HEARING, as well as in the SPEAKING! IT WAS A SPECTACULAR MANIFESTATION TO ALL THE EARTH OF THE ARRIVAL OF THE MIRACULOUS POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!

3. What was the NAME of the day on which this great display of the Holy Spirit's power occurred? Acts 2:1.

COMMENT: The word "pentecost" is a Greek word meaning "fifty," or "count fifty." The Holy Spirit came on PENTECOST,

fifty days after the Sunday immediately following Jesus' resurrection.

4. Had it been FORETOLD by Christ that the apostles would have supernatural power after they received the Holy Spirit? Acts 1:8. What were they to DO with this POWER? Same verse and Mark 16:15, 17. Notice especially verse 17.

COMMENT: The sudden, spectacular, awe-inspiring exhibit of divine power working within these men on the day of Pentecost, heralded to the whole world the BEGINNING of the time when all who would thirst for the Holy Spirit CAN receive it!

It marked the BEGINNING of the climaxing act of God's supreme creative work. It opened the era foretold by God long ago when He said to His ancient nation Israel, and through it to the WHOLE WORLD, "The days come ... that I will make a NEW COVENANT with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah ... I [NOT man, but God] will put My LAW IN THEIR INWARD PARTS, and write it IN THEIR HEARTS" (Jer. 31:31, 33 and Heb. 8:8-10).

This mighty rushing of the Spirit down to our earth marked the ADVENT of the POWER which God would use to ENGRAVE HIS LAW WITH IN THE HEARTS of those who surrender themselves to Him! It is the POWER of His HOLY SPIRIT which He offers to place within us! That is why God made this such a spectacular and momentous event. It was of tremendous import to all mankind.

In this event we see God's notice to the world that He is ready, from that time forward, to SUPERNATURALLY STRENGTHEN those who receive His Holy Spirit, so that Christ can ESTABLISH the New Covenant with them at His second coming. At that time He will ask those who are thus strengthened to be His collective "wife" for all eternity in the Kingdom of God!

But the WORLD IS completely unaware of the great IMPORT of the miracles which occurred at the advent of the Holy Spirit! How dull can a dull-minded world be? It's time to WAKE UP -- it's LATER than most people think!

On that particular Day of Pentecost occurred an experience UNIQUE in all history -- NEVER AGAIN to be repeated! What happened on that day was a FULFILLMENT of Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:28-29). As Peter explained, it was the ADVENT of the OTHER COMFORTER -- the Holy Spirit -- from HEAVEN.

Yes, the Holy Spirit came with POWER on the Day of Pentecost, 31 A.D., and it HAS BEEN HERE EVER SINCE! But for nearly 2,000 years now, most of the world has REJECTED this power -- the ONLY means by which men could receive the happiness and blessings they CRAVE SO desperately!

Apostles Miraculously Strengthened!

The apostles were mortal human beings just as you and I. But they received the great POWER of the Holy Spirit. That is why the Holy Spirit was sent -- to spiritually strengthen PEOPLE.

Notice what other MANIFESTATIONS OF POWER the apostles showed by reason of the Holy Spirit dwelling within and WORKING THROUGH them.

1. How SPIRITUALLY WEAK were the apostles BEFORE they received the Holy Spirit? Did they even slumber the night before Christ was crucified? Mat. 26:40-45.

2. How SPIRITUALLY WEAK WAS Peter BEFORE the Holy Spirit came into him on the day of Pentecost? Mat. 26:69-70. How many times did Peter DENY he knew Christ, whom He actually knew so well? Verse 75. Was he CONVERTED then? Luke 22:32.

COMMENT: Peter was so weak spiritually BEFORE he received

the Holy Spirit, that he even denied three times that he knew Jesus.

The other disciples were in the same condition. They didn't have the SPIRITUAL STRENGTH of character to stay awake as Jesus prayed before being taken by the Roman soldiers. Then when the soldiers came, they FORSOOK Jesus and FLED in fear! (Mat. 26:56.)

3. But how did Peter become AFTER the Holy Spirit came into him -- AFTER he was CONVERTED? Acts 2:14.

COMMENT: A MIRACULOUS CHANGE came over Peter! Peter spoke BOLDLY to the multitudes gathered in Jerusalem. FULL OF POWER, he and the other 119 disciples preached Christ so MIGHTILY and CONVINCINGLY, that 3,000 people repented of their sins and were baptized on that memorable day of Pentecost! (Acts 2:41.)

Peter's power, through the Spirit, became SO GREAT that even those in his SHADOW were healed! (Acts 5:15, 16.)

4. What was Peter's first miracle? Acts 3:2, 4-8. Did Peter and John take any PERSONAL CREDIT for this miracle? Acts 3:12-13, 16. Or did Peter ascribe it to the healing power of the HOLY SPIRIT? Verse 12.

5. Did all the other apostles also become strong and possess GREAT POWER AFTER they received the Holy Spirit? Acts 4:31, 33.

6. Did Philip perform miracles SIMILAR to those of Christ's? Acts 8:5-7. And Stephen also? Acts 6:8.

7. Did Paul also perform Christ's works -- miracles similar to Christ's? Acts 14: 3, 8-10. Read also Acts 28:3, 5.

COMMENT: Shortly AFTER the apostle Paul was MIRACULOUSLY struck down and converted by Jesus Christ (Acts 9:1-22), he began to be such a great INSTRUMENT in God's hands, that he became one of the mightiest apostles of the New Testament! (Paul's name was originally Saul. Later it was changed to Paul.)

8. What are some of the OTHER miracles the apostles performed by the POWER of God? Read Acts 5:12-16; 9:36-41 and 13:6-11.

COMMENT: The apostle Peter, Paul, and the other apostles, were performing the very "signs" and WONDERS Jesus said they would do AFTER they RECEIVED GOD'S POWER!

The DEMAND on Paul's time became so great that he was unable to visit all the sick who lived at a distance. God therefore honored a SPECIAL MEANS! Paul ANOINTED and PRAYED OVER PIECES of CLOTH -- handkerchiefs and aprons -- and sent them to those requesting prayer for healing -- and THEY WERE HEALED! (Acts 19:11-12.) By the pieces of cloth which were a reminder? No! But by the very POWER OF GOD! That SAME power works in the SAME manner today through the TRUE ministers of God!

The apostles of the New Testament truly did perform the works of Christ! They did the very WORK of God the FATHER which His Holy Spirit BEGAN in and through the PERSON OF Jesus in the human flesh. That work was then continued through the COLLECTIVE body of disciples which is the BODY OF CHRIST -- the CHURCH OF GOD!

That Church continues to EXIST TODAY! It is composed of God-called and SPIRIT-EMPOWERED Christians performing this SAME work! The "fruits" being produced positively IDENTIFY the true Church of God today!

9. During the time of God's soon-coming punishment on this sinful world, will His "TWO WITNESSES" perform even GREATER miracles than Christ and the apostles did? John 14:12 and Rev. 11:3, 5-6.

Man's creation in Eden was complete only in the PHYSICAL sense. He was created a perfect PHYSICAL specimen -- but NOT a perfect SPIRITUAL CREATION! He was created WITHOUT the divine SPIRITUAL POWER within him.

But EXACTLY what is this spiritual creation God desires to produce in man? Let's be SURE we understand!

1. Is God still in the PROCESS of FORMING and MOLDING man as a potter works with clay? Isa. 64:8.

2. Did Job realize that God was forming a SPECIAL CREATION in his life? Job 14:14-15.

COMMENT: Notice especially the latter part of Job 14:15: "THOU WILT HAVE A DESIRE TO THE WORK OF THINE HANDS." The "work" was JOB! Job knew he was merely a piece of divine WORKMANSHIP in the hands of the active Creator. Merely a piece of PLIABLE CLAY IN THE HANDS OF THE MASTER POTTER!

3. Are converted SPIRIT-LED Christians being fashioned for a SPECIFIC purpose? Isa. 43:7 and Eph. 2:10.

COMMENT: The word "we" in New Testament language refers to spirit-begotten CHRISTIANS. WE, then, are God's WORKMANSHIP. Yes, we are "created" -- NOW BEING CREATED -- "UNTO GOOD WORKS" -- unto perfect SPIRITUAL CHARACTER in OBEDIENCE to God.

So what God is actually creating in Spirit-directed humans is the SUPREME MASTERPIECE of all His works of creation! He is in the process of creating millions -- yes, BILLIONS -- of what will become PERFECT, SPIRIT-BORN Sons of God at the resurrection!

God is creating His supreme masterpiece by two distinct steps: Man, the CLAY MATERIAL CREATION (Genesis 1), is only the first phase of what is to become God's finished SPIRITUAL creation. For man, the CLAY MODEL, has to be fashioned and molded by EXPERIENCE AND WITH THE POWERFUL HELP OF GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT, into the finished SPIRITUAL masterpiece of all God's creation!

But before the second phase of man's creation -- his spiritual growth -- begins, God the Father must FIRST BEGET US by placing His Holy Spirit WITHIN US. We are then IMPREGNATED, so to speak, by the "seed" or germ of eternal life. It is the BEGETTAL of the life of God within our minds! We then compare to a newly BEGOTTEN babe in its mother's womb that BEGINS TO GROW!

4. What are we CALLED when the Father begets us with His Spirit? I John 3:1 and Rom. 8:14-17.

COMMENT: We are called the (begotten) Sons of God.

5. Do we partake of the NATURE and CHARACTERISTICS of GOD when begotten? II Pet. 1:3-4.

6. What is the BASIC characteristic of God's nature? I John 4:16. Is this the SAME LOVE that will ENABLE US to "fulfill" -- to OBEY -- God's laws? Rom. 13:10 and 5:5.

COMMENT: The Holy Spirit of God imparts God's love to us. God's love makes possible our performance of SPIRITUAL WORKS -- acts -- PLEASING in God's sight! Thus we fulfill God's Law of LOVE! IF YOU have God's love, you will -- BY THE POWER OF GOD, and NOT by your own human strength -- KEEP ALL TEN OF HIS COMMANDMENTS! But YOU MUST CHOOSE to obey and then CONTINUALLY STRIVE to DO God's will! This is YOUR PART in the strengthening of your WILL and CHARACTER.

No one who CONTINUES to flagrantly break God's Law of Love has received the Spirit of God or has the POWER of God working in him!

But if we have God's Spirit in us, then God's NATURE, which is LOVE, will RADIATE from us in obedience and good works.

7. If we are begotten and grow by God's Spirit, can we

eventually ATTAIN to the VERY LIKENESS and STATURE -- the very COMPOSITION - of God? Psalms 17:15 and I John 3:2.

COMMENT: We are now only the SPIRITUALLY begotten Sons of God. But we will be LIKE Him when we are BORN of God's Spirit!

We Must Grow Spiritually

1. Must the lives of Spirit-begotten Christians be completely CHANGED from their former SINFUL WAY of living? Rom. 12:2 and Eph. 4:23-24. Is this changing process producing the NEW "creation" in man? II Cor. 5:17.

COMMENT: YOUR WHOLE LIFE and your ATTITUDE of mind MUST BE COMPLETELY CHANGED -- CONVERTED! This TRANSFORMATION (not just a REFORMATION) IS A TREMENDOUS UNDERTAKING. It requires a MIRACLE! Such a change would be impossible to bring about or account for, except it were by a SUPERNATURAL ACT of Almighty God -- your BEGETTAL by the Holy Spirit! The receiving and INDWELLING of the Holy Spirit is a RENEWING OF THE MIND.

God stands pledged, upon your REAL and THOROUGH repentance and faith in Christ (Acts 2:38), to begin the performance of this tremendous miracle by literally putting His Holy Spirit WITHIN YOU. But God CANNOT work this complete change in your life unless you are WILLING to SURRENDER YOURSELF TO HIM and SUBMIT to the process!

2. Do begotten Christians need to GROW SPIRITUALLY? II Pet. 3:18. Are we then compared to little children growing up again? I Pet. 2:2 and Mat. 18:2-3.

3. After whom are we to PATTERN our lives as we grow spiritually? Eph. 4:15. And to what END RESULT? Eph. 4:13. Will Christ live IN and THROUGH US? Col. 1:27; Gal. 2:20 and I John 4:2, 4.

COMMENT: Your impregnation by the Holy Spirit -- the very SPIRIT and ATTITUDE of God Almighty -- will plant within you the SEED of the DIVINE NATURE of God. It will DEVELOP HIS CHARACTER in you!

Upon receiving His Spirit, you will begin to THINK as God thinks, SEE things as God does, and you will begin to ACT as He acts. YOUR WHOLE ATTITUDE WILL BEGIN TO CHANGE. You'll be more like God every day because you will have the MIND of Jesus Christ.

And if, in this life, we GROW SPIRITUALLY and our thinking and ways have been CHANGED until we really do become new characters, CONFORMED to God's will; then that clay model, WORKED OVER, fashioned, and shaped into the ROUGH spiritual image of God, will suddenly be changed into the FINISHED, perfected SPIRITUAL CREATION at the RESURRECTION! We shall then be BORN of God -- we shall then BE Gods!

Power for the Asking!

1. How READILY will God give us His Holy Spirit of power today? Luke 11:10-13. But are there PRIOR CONDITIONS to receiving it? Acts 2:38 and 5:32. These CONDITIONS are EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER!

COMMENT: If we repent, and are reconciled to God by the DEATH of Christ, THEN God is more willing to give us His Spirit than we are willing to give bread to our children. But we must WANT to obey God and GIVE OUR STRONGEST COOPERATION to the Holy Spirit which will give us the spiritual strength to OBEY God!

2. Do begotten children of God have DIRECT ACCESS to the

Father in heaven? Eph. 2:13, 18 and Heb. 10:19-20.

3. Did Jesus instruct us HOW to establish this contact? Mat. 6:6.

COMMENT: Ever since the Holy Spirit -- the POWER of God -- arrived on Pentecost, 31 A.D., man has had the opportunity to come DIRECTLY to the very THRONE OF THE FATHER IN PRAYER, through Jesus Christ and the HOLY SPIRIT! What a priceless privilege!

In the Old Testament times NO ONE prayed to the Father. NO ONE addressed God as "FATHER" then. And only an EXTREMELY FEW could then address the God who was to become the SON! But the Son, Jesus Christ, came to DECLARE TO ALL who the Father is (John 1:18) -- to declare that all may now be begotten of Him and have ACCESS to Him through the Holy Spirit!

4. What are the SPECIAL ADVANTAGES of this close relationship with our Heavenly Father? Mat. 21:22 and Heb. 4:16. WHY may we receive what we ask? I John 3:22.

5. Why was Jesus ALWAYS heard and answered by the Father? Heb. 5:7.

COMMENT: Jesus was in CONSTANT CONTACT with the Father. He received ANSWERS to His prayers and performed mighty miracles through the POWER of God's Spirit in Him! We may ALSO establish this very SAME CONTACT and receive answers today as Jesus did!

6. What are some of the RESULTS, or "fruits," that are made manifest in our lives if we possess God's Spirit? Gal. 5:22-23 and Rom. 15:13.

7. What SPECIAL "gifts" are bestowed by God through the power of the Holy Spirit? I Cor. 12:1, 4-11.

COMMENT: Just imagine! These are some of the ADDITIONAL things God gives those who surrender their lives to Him and receive His Holy Spirit! God divides these special GIFTS among certain ones in His Church as HE wills.

8. Which is the GREATEST attribute or characteristic God transmits to us by the Holy Spirit? Is it LOVE -- "CHARITY"? I Cor. 13:13. Skim rapidly the whole chapter.

9. How MUCH of God's Spirit can we receive in this life? Eph. 1:13-14 and II Cor. 5:5.

COMMENT: An "earnest" is a "TOKEN or PLEDGE of what is to come" -- according to Webster's Dictionary. Therefore, the "earnest" of God's Spirit is a SMALL PART of the Spirit and power with which one is imbued at first. But after this initial imbueement, we GROW spiritually, and at Christ's return, we'll BECOME SPIRIT -- become COMPLETELY COMPOSED of God's Spirit of power!

Paul received only a comparatively SMALL PORTION of the Holy Spirit as compared to the FULNESS of the Spirit that Jesus received (John 3:34). Yet look at what it did through Paul! By the example of Paul's life WE know that we also can be GREATLY STRENGTHENED.

 PHOTO CAPTION: COMPLETE CIRCUIT -- Hydroelectric generators and transmission lines at Boulder Dam, Colorado. God's Holy Spirit flows out from Him and back again -- much like the flow of electrical current in a complete circuit.

10. Do we receive all AT ONE TIME enough of God's HOLY SPIRIT -- His divine power -- to last forever? II Cor. 4:16 and Phil. 1:19.

COMMENT: God does NOT put within us a sort of

miracle-producing dynamo which CONTINUALLY GENERATES this POWER. WE MUST BE CONTINUALLY RECEIVING THIS POWER! Remember, the Holy Spirit is compared to water -- it FLOWS. Jesus said the power of God shall flow out of our innermost being! (John 7:38.) God's power is ACTIVE -- DYNAMIC! It is not static. It flows INTO us; and then OUT OF US in performing God's will!

You cannot receive a SUPPLY of God's Spirit and then bottle it up within you. It CIRCULATES -- like electricity in a complete circuit -- from God, INTO YOU, and then OUT FROM YOU in LOVE, OBEDIENCE, faith, joy, patience, and then back to God! And it MUST BE RENEWED IN US DAILY -- through contact with God IN PRAYER! THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER!

The Spiritual POWER available through the Holy Spirit is the power needed for SELF-MASTERY, for accomplishment, success, abundant JOY, PEACE OF MIND and the HAPPINESS we all desire!

Do you begin to grasp how much BETTER a life man could live if he were REALLY IN CONTACT with His Creator? And just think! ALL this IS available to YOU for the ASKING!

Spirit the Key to Glorious Immortality

Let's notice how having the Holy Spirit within us now is the key to receiving eternal life and glory.

1. Did Jesus Christ DIE? I Cor. 15:3. Was He resurrected FROM THE DEAD? Verse 4.

2. Did God the Father raise Christ from death? Eph. 1:17, 19-20.

COMMENT: Note that verse 17 tells us that it is God the Father and Christ who are being discussed. Verse 20 says, "He [the Father] raised Him [Christ] from the dead, and set Him [Christ] at His [the Father's] own right hand in the heavenly places." So it was GOD THE FATHER who raised Christ from death to immortality by the POWER of the Holy Spirit.

3. Are there many PROOFS of Christ's resurrection from the dead? I Cor. 15:5-8.

4. Was Christ the FIRST one of MANY to be resurrected to ETERNAL life? Acts 26:23; Col. 1:18 and I Cor. 15:23.

COMMENT: Christ is the "firstborn among MANY BRETHREN" (Rom. 8:29).

5. Does the Father promise Christians that He will also raise them to immortality -- if His Holy Spirit is dwelling within them? Rom. 8:11 and I Cor. 6:14. "The Lord" here is Christ.

6. WHEN and HOW QUICKLY will our "change" come? I Cor. 15:51-52.

7. When changed at the resurrection, will we become as Jesus Christ is TODAY? Phil. 3:20-21 and I John 3:2. What TYPE of body was Jesus changed into at His resurrection? I Cor. 15:44-45

COMMENT: We will ALSO be given a body then like Christ has now! The outstanding difference between the body we now have and the one we will be given, is that while the one we now have is a NATURAL or MORTAL body, the one we SHALL receive will be a SPIRITUAL body!

If we are ALIVE at the time of the resurrection, our MORTAL BODIES shall suddenly be changed. If we have DIED, we will be resurrected from the grave with a new, spiritual body!

8. Was Jesus, with His SPIRITUAL body, able to suddenly APPEAR AND DISAPPEAR? Luke 24:36-37, 31. Did he PASS THROUGH barriers or walls? John 20:19.

COMMENT: When we become Spirit, we'll be able to perform

these SAME miraculous feats! We will not be subject to PHYSICAL LAWS then, for we will not be composed of matter, but of SPIRIT -- the Spirit of POWER!

9. Will our spiritual bodies be capable of TRAVELING through space at TREMENDOUS SPEED? John 20:17 and Mat. 28:9.

COMMENT: Notice that Christ had been able to travel to the Father in heaven and return to earth on the SAME DAY. Here again is the power of the Holy Spirit IN ACTION!

10. When necessary, will we be able to change into a body of PHYSICAL FLESH and bone so mortal eyes can see us? Luke 24:37-39.

COMMENT: A spirit is COMPOSED of spirit essence. It is not composed of PHYSICAL flesh. Since man is in the LIKENESS of God, both man and God have form and shape. But one is composed of flesh, while the other is composed of SPIRIT!

11. Once made spirit, can we ever DIE again? Luke 20:35-36.

12. Was Jesus to be "GLORIFIED" AGAIN after His resurrection? John 17:4-5. How does Christ's GLORIFIED BODY appear to those who are privileged to see Him as He is? Rev. 1:13-16.

COMMENT: As God, Christ had a glorious, resplendent, spiritual body before He took the human form. Now Christ is GLORIFIED again.

Christ's SPIRIT BODY IS SO POWERFUL that it radiates light AS BRIGHT AS THE SUN!

13. Will God GLORIFY His Spirit-begotten children at the resurrection by giving them this SAME GREAT POWER AND GLORY? Rom. 8:17 and Col. 3:4

14. Did Jesus give his disciples a fleeting glimpse of this FUTURE GLORIFIED CONDITION when He was "transfigured"? Mat. 17:1-2. Note that this was a VISION they saw concerning the future (verse 9).

COMMENT: This ULTIMATE POWER we shall receive at the resurrection will be SO GREAT, IT WILL MAKE OUR SPIRIT BODIES SHINE AS THE SUN, and our raiment will be as DAZZLING LIGHT! All this can come later by having God's Spirit working within US NOW!

15. What other scripture gives us a picture of our GLORIFIED BODIES? Dan. 12:2-3. Wouldn't you also like to POSSESS such a body someday?

SUMMARY

The astounding TRUTH of the Bible is that God desires to place within mankind the great power of His Holy Spirit -- as a FREE GIFT! By this power, man can keep God's perfect, holy, SPIRITUAL laws.

This is how God is now fulfilling HIS part of the New Covenant with those He has spiritually begotten. He is NOW ENGRAVING HIS ROYAL LAW IN THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF TRUE CHRISTIANS THROUGH HIS SPIRIT!

God is in the process of forming His SPIRITUAL creation in man -- but only in those who have YIELDED to Him and have allowed His Spirit to enter and beget them as His spiritual sons! Yes, God IS the Potter and we ARE the clay!

This life is the training ground. We are here for the express purpose of learning how to rightly direct the vast powers God will give us when WE ARE born as His Sons -- powers so TREMENDOUS the mind of man cannot now conceive!!

At the RESURRECTION our spiritual creation will be COMPLETE. We will then have the MIND of God IN FULL! We'll be COMPLETELY COMPOSED of Holy Spirit, and BE THE VERY SONS OF GOD IN GOD'S

KINGDOM! Christ will have COMPLETED His New Testament Covenant with us. We shall then be able to obey His laws PERFECTLY -- FOREVER! (I John 3:9.)

Few grasp how GREAT and ALL-POWERFUL GOD REALLY IS, AND HIS LOVING KINDNESS IN MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO HAVE HIS MIND AND GREAT POWER!

This knowledge has NOW reached you. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?